

Contributions

PULPIT ECHOES

Decision—Josh. 24:15

Every day we are called upon to make a decision *for* or *against* the right.

The success of our lives depend upon our decisions.

God would rather have us decide fully to receive the enemy as Teacher and Master than to be undecided.

Indecision, Jesus condemned, so did Joshua and Elijah.

It was better for the prodigal son that he made the decision to leave the fathers home, than to be a Hybrid or a two-faced servant of the father. He came to his senses the sooner.

In a large manufacturing establishment just below the large clock is the motto printed in large letters, "*Do it now.*"

If you would do some labor, or task, or duty, or service, you must first make the decision, and make it correctly and firmly.

You may not be able to make a strong decision the first time you try. You may have to *will* a number of times. Jesus taught that one can do what one *wills* to do. We must keep on willing until our will becomes strong. The will becomes strong by *willing*. Many are lost because they do not will to be saved. Multitudes are saved because they say, "I will, I will, God helping me I will be saved."

Two things or persons present themselves unto us as teachers, God and Satan, the world and the flesh. God presents himself to save you and bless you and make you happy and give you a home beyond the skies. Satan makes these promises and then lies out of it and gives you sorrow, woe, anguish, death, condemnation. Life and death are set before you, choose *this day* what you will have.

Z. T. LIVENGOD.

Burden Bearing—Matt. 11:28-30

Man was created to be a worker but his service was to be free and joyous.

Jesus does not promise liberation from service but endeavors to make it joyous. The burden is still ours but he makes it light. The yoke does not release the beast from his burden but aids and makes easy the drawing of the load.

The yoke which Jesus gives is adapted by divine wisdom to meet our requirements. How strange that any should refuse to put it on.

Three burdens are by divine appointment ours to carry. (a) The burden of individual responsibility (Gal. 6:5) Our destiny is the result of our choosing no matter how much we evade the acknowledgement of the truth. God's word no where justifies the shrinking of individual duty (effort) because of sinful heredity, evil environment, or personal insult.

(b) The burden of helpfulness (Gal. 6:2.) As we care for the physical weak and infirm so are we to care for those spiritually weak and infirm. We become responsible for our neglect and not for their sins. As Christ lifted from us the burden of sin, out of love, so we for love to him and for our fellow man should help those overtaken by sin and are weak in the faith.

"Give him a lift! Don't kneel in prayer,
Nor moralize with his despair.
The man is down and his great need
Is ready help not prayer and creed.

* * * * *
And he shall win a royal crown
Who gives them a lift when they are down."

(c) The burden of self care (caring for life) (Peter 5:7.) To do with this life as we please is a great burden. To place ourselves into the hands of Christ and let him do with us and for us as he will is to find *true rest* for the soul.

L. W. DITCH

SONNET COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

EMILY BEATRICE GNAGEY

"Earth has not anything to show more fair;
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty;
This city now doth, like a garment, wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendour valley, rock, or hill;
Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
The river glideth at his own sweet will:
Dear God! the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still!"

—William Wordsworth.

Among the master productions dwelling upon the restful side of human life, literature "has not not anything to show more fair" than the impassioned lines composed by William Wordsworth upon Westminster Bridge.

It is a soothing thing to withdraw from the tears and turmoil, the song and strife of day, and to behold the world at rest in a measure as it lay on the seventh day of Creation. What a blessed boon the quiet night is to this weary world. To enter into its spirit is to become a citizen of that world of peace within the heart for which the peace of night stands and of which, with all its serenity, it is yet but a faint portrayal.

"Night,
Blest hour of rest, gift of a hand divine,
What quiet, peace, tranquillity are thine!"

Many poets have read the mystic meaning of night; but few bring its tranquillity so feelingly near to us as does Wordsworth. Let us pause to consider the scene that inspired him. Standing upon Westminster Bridge, a spot of historic significance which would hence suggest life at its most earnest moments, and surrounded immediately by the most interesting portion of London which in daylight comprises thronged thoroughfares. No doubt Westminster Abbey loomed up

before the poet in gloomy grandeur; the magnificent Cathedral of St. Paul's also must have been in his sight as well as the imposing London Tower and other large buildings, some royal houses and many business places. Such a view must have occasioned the author's lines:

"Silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky."

And then he deepens the placidness of the picture by reminding us of the closed factories when he speaks of "the smokeless air." Nature herself is sympathetic with the sleeping city; for the turbulent Thames flows more gently than during wakeful hours.

"Dear God, the very houses seem asleep;
And all that mighty heart is lying still."

In the closing lines we are reminded how stillness is intensified when it is the stillness of rest as opposed to stagnation. The latter implies utter inactivity and lifelessness; while the former implies a surcease from labor and this repose is nobler and lovelier and deeper. London slumbering,—at rest—means vastly more than a desert asleep. And so, perhaps, there is no higher lesson to be gleaned from this charming sonnet than this:

"There is no pleasure keen as pain's release;
There is no peace so deep as that by struggle won;
There is no calm like that when storm is done."

(Read at the class in English Literature, Ashland College, 16 April, 1902.)

HUMAN INSTRUMENTALITY

J. M. TOMBAUGH

The work of saving the lost is the Lord's, for without Christ we can do nothing. In emphasizing this truth we must still bear in mind that divinely directed human effort and the employment of rational means are, in most cases, elements of the Lord's plan both for converting the sinner and for energizing and sanctifying the church. To minify the value of human effort and to rely wholly upon means that are super-rational does not add to God's glory, for the work of saving men and the glory of it are his whether salvation be wrought solely thro the Spirit's silent power or whether he calls to his aid agencies which are human and natural.

That God is the source to which every worker must look for success and power must be realized by every one, but just how far God employs human agency and natural means in the conversion of sinners and the making of saints is a matter concerning which much difference of opinion exists. Some have wholly eliminated the human element, and make salvation a matter of election pure and simple. Others have gone even farther astray by almost eliminating the divine element, rejecting the super-naturalness of religion and making salvation a matter of "works" rather than of grace. The truth lies between these two extremes. The work is the Lord's; he directs and blesses and completes it, and without him we can